

## **City of Concord Recreation and Park Advisory Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes from January 18, 2007 Held at COMF**

Attendance:

**Committee Members:** Candace White-Bouchard, Janet Schofield, Cheryl Bourassa, Mary Miller, Bill Haubrich, Lauren Fleidler, Chiara Dolcino, John Mercier, Andrea Goldberg and Councilor Jim Bouley.

**Staff Members:**

Carolyn Tracy – Recreation Department, David Gill – Recreation Department, Chris Jacques – General Services

Meeting called to order by Candace at 5 pm

**FIELD COSTS:**

Chris highlighted the expense report on Field Costs. 65% of his budget goes directly into field maintenance.

Bill asked Carolyn how much we receive in revenue from user groups. Carolyn highlighted different fees charged and reminded the group that one of the biggest users: Youth Groups pay a one time fee per year of \$50. That is not per team it is per league and includes all uses (practices and games). There was a short discussion on what youth leagues use our fields: four little leagues, two youth football leagues, boys and girls lacrosse leagues, three High Schools and the Recreation Department.

Mary stated she felt the youth groups should pay more. Chiara stated soccer teams pay for practice for indoor soccer each time they use it. It would not make economic sense for the owner to allow a one time fee and play as much as you need. Why should the City allow teams to pay a one time fee vs. per use fee?

Andrea asked what we charge for Adult Leagues. Carolyn highlighted what the Adult Leagues pay and payment amounts depend on time of day and field. Higher fees are charged for use of Memorial Field complex while lesser amounts at the neighborhood parks. There was a short discussion on Adult Leagues. The group felt they could pay more but at what percentage of expenses?

Janet asked if it would be possible to collect a fee per person and who is currently collecting the fees? The Recreation Department collects all the user fees from both the youth leagues and adult leagues. The Recreation Department several years ago collected fees per person and it was a logistical nightmare. Some teams were good while others often did not report correct numbers. Adult leagues used to be charged a resident fee and a non resident fee. Somehow most of the teams were made up of Concord Residents and often resided at the same address.

There was discussion around who should pay fees and who should not. Current users who are not charged are: Recreation Department, Concord School District, Merrimack Valley School District and Bishop Brady. All other users pay fees.

Candace asked Carolyn to bring back a recommendation for new fees for the next meeting. Carolyn agreed. Councilor Bouley asked if possible to make the fee structure less confusing and easy to explain. He would like a list of current users and what they currently pay, what fields they use and then what would be the new fee.

User	Current Cost	What Fields	New fee	Youth or Adult Group
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Candy stated that we should not expect to cover 100% of the expenses but maybe 50%. Group agreed.

### **REFUND POLICY**

Carolyn reviewed the current refund policy and report on 2006 refunds. The Department refunded over \$11,000 in 2006. This included classes that were cancelled as well as refunds from people who could not make it to a program or they were not satisfied. There was a short discussion regarding the current policy that allows folks to get their money back for any reason. The refund policy should be amended to not allow refunds unless for the following reason:

- Program was cancelled by the Recreation Department
- Doctor's note stating the person cannot take part in the program due to medical reasons.
- And that we need to make sure we advertise this policy "Early and Often". Full Disclosure.
- Group agreed there needs to be an appeal process. The group agreed if someone feels they need to appeal a refund denial from Recreation Department they should write a letter to the Recreation Director asking for an appeal. The Director will then forward the letter to the City Manager for a final recommendation.

Andrea made a motion on the new policy stated above. Chiara seconded. Passed Unanimously.

Councilor Bouley asked how the Recreation Department currently thanks people who make a donation to the Recreation Department's Youth Scholarship Fund. Carolyn stated we send out thank you letters to everyone who makes a donation during each calendar year. John stated maybe we could include their names in the brochure once a year and maybe on the department's web site. Carolyn agreed.

### **RECREATION DIRECTOR TO RETIRE:**

Carolyn announced she has informed the City Manager she plans on retiring this June with 19 years of service to the City. Exact date is not known yet however, she told him it will be between June 1 and June 15. Everyone congratulated Carolyn.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

David Gill  
Recreation Supervisor